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ABSTRACT

The work of researchers, theorists, and practitioners suggests that to facilitate academic success for college-level students of English as a Second Language (ESL), attention must focus on, but not be limited to, the following areas: (1) students need to become "acquirers," not just "learners," of the second language; (2) students need to develop into "second language writers" who can use writing for discovery and creation of meaning; and (3) opportunities to write for multiple audiences, to become participants in the academic and discourse communities, and to acquire the relevant knowledge that accompanies membership, must be provided. Each of these objectives is substantial, and all are interdependent. Sheltered English classes as commonly conceived may not be the most effective response to these needs. The Writing Across the Curriculum movement offers a pedagogy that may help ensure that sheltered classes achieve their potential. Two significant features include: (1) the premise that writing expressively about academic content is a powerful method of making a subject the student's own and integrating it into his knowledge structure; and (2) recognition that the Writing Across the Curriculum movement is keyed to an element that is strongly linked to any meaningful academic change--extensive faculty development. Incorporating these principles into the already linguistically enhanced sheltered classes can provide powerfully meaningful educational experiences for ESL students. (MSE)

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LANGUAGE ACROSS THE CURRICULUM AND ESL STUDENTS: COMPOSITION RESEARCH AND "SHELTERED COURSES"

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The clamor for educational reform from inside as well as from outside the educational field has naturally been focused on the educational processes of the native speaker of English. But the expectations for ESL students who participate in the educational cycle through college will be the same as those that will be demanded of native speakers of English. There is much in the recent work from the fields of composition research, cognitive psychology, and applied linguistics that can suggest direction to the educational processes that the ESL college student needs to experience.

The work of composition researchers, theorists and practitioners, together with the work of second language researchers and theorists to offers a rich and permeable matrix from which to formulate linguistic and academic experiences important for the success of ESL college students. It can easily be deduced that in order to facilitate academic success for ESL college students, attention will need to focus on, but not be limited to, the following areas. First and foremost, ESL students need to become Second language "acquirers", not merely second language "learners". They also need to develop into "second language writers", writers who can use writing for discovery and as a maker of meaning. As second language writers they need the opportunity to write for multiple audiences in the dominant academic culture. And finally, they will need to be given the opportunity to become participants in the academic and discourse communities and to acquire the relevant knowledge which membership involves. Each of these objectives is substantial and,

as we shall see, all are interdependent.

ACQUISITION AND WRITING

It is clearly evident that second language acquisition is the critical component in any attempt to bring ESL college students into the academic community. Fortunately, there is a growing body of knowledge and theory that is shedding light on ESL students as language acquirers and learners. Much of what we are learning has been due to the work of linguist Stephen Krashen. Relying on research from applied linguistics, he has recently developed a theory of second language acquisition that is proving to be suggestive to research and provocative to instruction (Krashen, 1982).

Three of his five major hypotheses are particularly pertinent to this discussion. First, Krashen makes a distinction between language learning and language acquisition. Language learning involves conscious knowledge of a second language, knowledge of grammar and rules, and the ability to discuss them. Acquirers, on the other hand, are not aware of the process; they are only aware of using language as a means of communication. In addition, Krashen presents an elaborate hypothesis based on what he terms "comprehensible input", that level of second language input that the acquirer needs in order to understand and grow in the second language. According to Krashen, in second language acquisition as with first language acquisition, "(w)e acquire by 'going for meaning' first." (p.21) And finally, he constructs what he terms the "affective filter", those affective variables which influence the acquisition process. These variables can be

grouped into three major areas: the importance of high motivation for second language acquisition, the relationship of high self-confidence and self-esteem to the acquisition process, and the role that personal and academic anxiety plays in second language acquisition. Krashen indicates that in order to facilitate acquisition, new material must be "comprehensible" and occur in contexts which lower anxiety and which encourage self-confidence and self-esteem, contexts that in his terms, "lower the filter."

Krashen's hypotheses are drawn from research findings that indicate that second language acquisition is facilitated when the target language is used in a natural communicative context. Krashen and others have recently begun to focus on the importance of what has been termed "communicative competence" in second language acquisition, a competence whose achievement is subconscious, a competence acquired through experience in active and real communication of importance to the learner, a competence whose achievement necessitates a student-centered, communicatively-based approach to Second language instruction.

The work of writing process researchers and practitioners has continually advocated the use of classroom environments that are highly compatible with current research and thinking in second language acquisition. From the wave of instruction-centered composition research and thinking have come teaching methods and techniques designed to have writing occur in real and communicatively-based classroom experiences. These now familiar methods include collaborative peer-writing groups, extensive writing and drafting, daily journals, and a different perspective on the treatment of error. These strategies also create

classroom contexts which are secure, student-centered learning environments that minimize teacher-centeredness, and consequently, intrinsically address the affective variables that influence acquisition.

The utilization of a writing process approach with ESL students has been advocated by an increasing number of researchers and practitioners. Process strategies and techniques in ESL writing instruction provide the ESL writer with a context where the language itself is used for problem-solving and thought, a non-punitive environment where the errors that all language learners must make can be made, a classroom environment that is based on trust where writing can be engaged as a act of discovery and a maker of meaning. They provide for genuine, meaningful communication in English, thus creating contexts that allow for Krashen's communicatively-based acquisition.

Process methods and techniques also address a critical component of the act of writing, the development of audience awareness. Within process instructional contexts, both native speakers and ESL writers have a number of audiences available for their writing; the group as a whole, individual members of the group, and ultimately, the instructor. But what is becoming clear is that these can only serve as "transitional" audiences in the development of a sense of "academic audience". The next step must then be writing for the academic audience, writing in what Britton, et al. (1975) terms "the transactional mode", the writing used "to perform a transaction that seeks outcomes in the real world" (p.160), the mode used to inform, persuade, and instruct, and the predominant mode of writing demanded in the

academic world.

WRITING AND AUDIENCE

The recent attention of leaders in the composition field to the importance of audience awareness has served to stress the concept and its role in the writing process. Yet, for those who are held responsible for students' ability to communicate their ideas to professors in all areas of the academic community, the question becomes not only how can the sense of audience be developed, but also how can a sense of "academic audience" best be developed? And for those who teach writing to students for whom English is a second language, the question becomes pivotal once it becomes clear that nothing less than the same objective, the development of a sense of academic audience, will be required if ESL writers are to be successful participants in the higher educational experience. L2 writers have some unique problems with establishing audience for their writing, problems that have not always been fully understood or acknowledged. There are several possible reasons for these problems, among them the fact that L2 writers present the unusual aspect of someone from another culture writing for an audience of a different, often unknown and unfamiliar subculture, the academic community.

WRITING AS A "SOCIAL EVENT"

Those who teach writing to ESL students are becoming aware of the fact that ESL writers have some unique problems with establishing audience for their writing, problems that have not always been fully understood or acknowledged. There are several possible reasons for these problems, among them the fact that ESL writers present the unusual aspect of someone from another

culture writing for an audience of a different, often unknown and unfamiliar subculture, the academic community. For ESL writers who, like all college students, must write for that somewhat vague, often unseen academic audience, the construction of the "mental sketch" of that reader often verges on the impossible and subsequently, the writing process is missing an essential element.

A possible solution to the problems created by audience for all writers is offered by those in the composition field who are in the process of defining the act of writing as a social act. Kroll's (1984) social perspective on audience sees writing as a fundamentally social activity "entailing processes of inferring the thought and feelings of the other persons involved in an act of communication." (p.179) Consequently, Kroll concludes that composition students should experience writing as a form of social interaction. This growing view of writing as primarily a "social event", has been enhanced by growing interest in two related areas: collaborative learning and the emerging awareness of the role which knowledge of academic and discourse communities plays in the act of composing.

Over the last few years, there has been an increased awareness of the potential of collaborative learning for every area of learning and thinking and, in particular, to writing. For Ken Bruffee, collaborative learning is a "form of indirect teaching in which the teacher sets the problem and organizes students to work it out collaboratively." (1984, p.637) He sees collaborative learning as the " institutional counterpoint of the social or collaborative nature of knowledge and thought,...."

(1983, p.165). Collaborative learning techniques such as peer writing and learning groups have become almost standard in process writing classroom instruction, and as we have seen they are becoming increasingly accepted in ESL instruction.

This growing view of writing as a social act has also been augmented and deepened by the introduction of the concept of discourse/knowledge communities into discussions and thinking on composing. This new perspective questions the assumption that expertise of any kind can be acquired outside of specific discourse communities. Faigley argues that writing in college is difficult for inexperienced writers (a description that can easily be applied to ESL writers) because they "lack the privileged language of the academic community". (p.536)

As in their use with native speakers, process techniques such as peer groups where talk facilitates writing, can provide contexts that allow ESL writers to see writing concretely as the social activity that it is, as an act of communication between a writer and an audience. However, there is a growing awareness that writing process instruction is not enough to facilitate the acquisition of the knowledge that allows for participation in the academic community, even for English dominant students.

Many, such as Gere, are beginning to believe that "literacy means joining a specific community through understanding the issues it considers important and developing the capacity to participate in conversations about those issues." p.120) Bizzell, in her 1986 article on basic writers in college, presents some views that can be seen as relevant to ESL writers. In her view, basic writers who enter college "are being asked to

learn a new dialect and new discourse conventions, but the outcomes of such learning is acquisition of a whole new world view." (p.297) And she presents the academic community as one "united almost entirely by language", whose preferred dialect in convention-bound discourse she sees as the very element that creates and organizes the knowledge that structures that world view. Bizzell concludes that in order to acquire that view, the basic writer must become "bicultural."

This growing awareness of writing as a social act performed within specific communities serves to reaffirm the fact that no discussion of ESL college writers can exclude the role that knowledge of the academic culture plays in the act of composing, nor can any discussion exclude the role which that knowledge plays in developing an accurate "mental sketch" of academic audience necessary to succeed in the academic world.

What shape the response to Bizzell, Gere, and others will take for English dominant students remains to be fully formulated. However, for ESL college students, the acceptance of this perspective impels a search for learning experiences that include but also go beyond the composition classroom. Needless to say, Bizzell's analysis of what college demands of basic writers is a formidable prescription when applied to ESL writers. For ESL students to become "bicultural" in Bizzell's schema necessitates the development of a level of "acculturation" to the academic world. This entails a familiarity with, though not necessarily the total adoption of, the ethos of the academic community. Many in the field of second language acquisition insist that some level of acculturation is in and of itself

necessary for acquisition. Krashen, while acknowledging that acculturation is not the only way to lower the affective filter that often inhibits acquisition, argues that it may be "the most effective way of lowering the affective filter and getting input." (p.48)

"SHELTERED" CONTENT COURSES

For ESL students who have experienced instructional contexts that facilitate acquisition and have had writing instruction which develops their writing ability and provides for transitional audiences, the last link must be the acquisition of knowledge that allows for the establishment of academic audience. Few would deny that the most effective way to fuse the need for participation in the academic/discourse communities necessary for the acquisition of knowledge with acculturation to the academic community is through experience in academic disciplines.

There has been considerable success in providing comprehensible input in academic content courses for second language college students in what have been termed "sheltered classes". Based on preliminary research inspired by portions of Krashen's theory, there is growing evidence that students with a certain level of the second language who take linguistically enhanced academic content courses in the second language, demonstrate increased second language proficiency as well as mastery of content. (Edwards, et. al., 1984; Freeman, et al., 1987)

While the actual components of "sheltered classes" are still being elaborated and researched, certain common elements and

guidelines are beginning to emerge:

a) Emphasis is on developing new attitudes towards students and high expectations for student success.

b) The subject matter is the focus. The curriculum and primary materials include those used with native speakers. Meaningful communication of knowledge and ideas is stressed. No grammar is taught.

c) Some form of team teaching is utilized. A content teacher is joined by a language teacher. The language teacher conducts demonstrations, engages in small group discussion, provides feedback to content professors on comprehensibility of subject matter, and advises on designing assignments.

d) Supplementary materials are often made available: supplementary (to the text) readings keyed to difficult or problematic material, video-cassettes of the class which could be reviewed by the students as needed, and glossaries of new, technical and/or discipline-specific vocabulary.

e) Students most likely to benefit from the approach are those who volunteer for the courses and who can be roughly classified as high-intermediate performers in the second language.

However, while there is increasing interest in employing this approach with ESL college students, "sheltered classes" as they have been described in the research, may not be the most effective response to the need for making ESL students participant members of the knowledge/discourse communities that exist in the academic world. The preliminary data on "sheltered courses" seem to indicate that some of the critical elements of recent research and theory are being ignored:

- courses with enrollments as high as 100 have been described. The implicit message is that the lecture-mode is the predominant mode of instruction.

- Methods of evaluation seem to rest on multiple choice exams instead of written essays.

- content faculty are either not prepared at all for ESL students (implying that they are not involved in the language acquisition component of the course)

OR the faculty development that is reported does not reflect the research on second language acquisition or language across the curriculum.

OR faculty are expected to prepare themselves through reading on acquisition and learning.

If these "sheltered classes" maintain the internal structure of most content classes, that is, where teachers talk and students listen, if they ignore the need for and importance of student-centered contexts, if they ignore the potential of collaborative learning to facilitate the acquisition of the knowledge and language necessary for membership in the discourse communities that are fundamental to the academic world, then, even if these courses prove effective in enhancing second language acquisition, they will not realize their full potential to serve as vehicles for membership and participation in the academic community.

Reither offers a suggestion that can be seen as directly addressing this critical issue. He urges that courses in any and all disciplines be structured "as a collaborative investigation of a scholarly field rather than the delivery of a body of

knowledge." (p.625) The growing Writing Across the Curriculum movement can essentially be viewed as an evolving response to Reither's suggestion and can provide a method of insuring that "sheltered classes" achieve their potential. Drawing from the work of writing researchers and practitioners and of cognitive psychologists advocates of the movement have developed a pedagogy based on the principle that writing is itself a heuristic, a mode of learning, and an instrument of thought.

The cornerstone of the movement is the premise that by writing expressively about academic content for themselves and their peers through journals and peer group discussions, students can be given a powerful method of making a subject their own, of integrating it into their own knowledge structure, as it leads to the cohesive kind of learning and thinking that is necessary for transactional writing, the writing of the academic community and audience.

And finally, the Writing Across the Curriculum movement is keyed to an element that is strongly linked to any meaningful academic change: extensive faculty development. Through faculty workshops that focus on composition and learning theory, journal writing, and the construction and evaluation of discipline-specific writing assignments, faculty members themselves experience writing as a mode of learning within an evolving community of writers.

Incorporating the principles which have informed the writing across the curriculum movement into the already linguistically enhanced "sheltered classes" can provide powerfully meaningful educational experiences for English as a second language students

by fusing many of the crucial elements necessary for their academic success. The utilization of writing as a heuristic for the "comprehensible" content of the discipline can enhance the learning of the content while the use of peer learning and writing groups can provide contexts that lower the affective filter and facilitate second language acquisition. Through the use of collaborative peer groups which emphasize talk and writing as modes of learning, ESL students experience multiple audiences for their writing while beginning their participation in the discourse/knowledge community of the discipline. And in addition, collaborative writing and learning groups in sheltered classes, by providing contexts that facilitate second language acquisition and assist the development of writing, simultaneously promote a level of acculturation to the academic community that in turn facilitates acquisition.

Furthermore, the binding and pivotal faculty development component when utilized for content faculty who would teach in "sheltered" classes for ESL students, could not only be a means to introduce the concept of writing as an instrument for learning, but it could also be expanded to introduce content faculty to background principles of second language acquisition and their importance and function in sheltered classes. Furthermore, this workshop experience can raise to the forefront the concept that every teacher is a language teacher, not only of English, but of the language of their particular disciplines, and ultimately, of the language of the academic world.

Finally, if properly designed and executed, writing-intensive "sheltered" courses can become instruments not only for

second language acquisition, but also for the acquisition of the language of the discipline, the ethos, the knowledge, and the language of the academic community necessary for developing a sense of academic audience.

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